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## TREATMENT OF CLUB-FOOT BY DIVIDING THE TENDO-ACHILLIS.

Section of the tendo-achillis has scarcely been proposed, except in certain cases of amputation of the foot by the method of Chopart ; after which, by the preponderance of the gastrocnemii muscles, the foot was turned backwards. The operation met with little favor, and, besides, the opportunity of performing it occurred but seldom ; so that it had, in fact, been lost sight of when Delpech had recourse to it, in the treatment of that variety of club-foot called *pied equin*, where the heel is strongly dragged up backwards. It was founded on the important fact, that in all cases of rupture of the tendo-achillis, in place of an immediate reunion, there is formed\* between the two ends of the tendon a knot (*bourellet*), which joins them together ; and that, at a later period, this becomes elongated, so as to increase the total length of the tendon without too much diminishing its solidity. The proceeding of Delpech is known : he divided the skin on each side of the tendon to the extent of an inch ; cut the tendon ; waited for the healing of the parts, and then applied an apparatus to elongate the tendinous cicatrix. This prevented many inconveniences—a painful operation—wounds slow in healing—sometimes exfoliation of the tendon, and elongation of the part only to a certain extent.

Dr. Strömager has endeavored to avoid all these causes of delay and imperfect success ; he went chiefly upon the fact that cicatrization takes place even where the ends of the tendon are not maintained in contact, but with a more considerable elongation. He has given two cases in detail, in which the good effects of his plan were very striking : the first was in a lad, nineteen years of age, who had suffered from club-foot from the time he was four years old. The leg was emaciated, the heel very much pulled back, and the limb useless ; while, by the employment of a wooden leg, the knee had been turned considerably outwards. Various means of extension were tried, with little effect, during many weeks, when it was resolved to divide the tendo-achillis. The proceeding is thus described by the operator. The patient was placed before me on a table, the left side turned towards me ; an assistant held the knee, while another laid hold of the foot, bringing it into such a position as to extend the tendo-achillis rather powerfully. I then took a curved and very narrow bistoury, and introduced it two inches above the insertion of the tendon, between it and the tibia, the back of the instrument being towards the knee, and the cutting edge towards the tendon, which was divided with a kind of snap. My intention was to make the external wounds as small as possible, to avoid the access of the air, and, if possible, prevent any exfoliation of the tendon. The apertures corresponded in size ex-

actly to the blade of the knife, and the tendon was cut from behind without the wound implicating the skin over it. The retention of the ends of the tendon only amounted to three-fourths of an inch, and the position of the foot was but little improved. The little wounds were dressed with sticking-plaster, and the foot was kept in a state of extension. On the third day the bandage was removed: the wounds were then healed; the foot did not follow the movements of the upper end of the tendon. Sixth day, the extremities of the tendon were united, so that the foot followed the movement of the upper part. On the tenth day the union was so firm that the patient could move the foot by the action of the calf of the leg. But little interval now existed between the divided extremities, and I then thought it time to proceed to the extension of the new intermediate texture. For this purpose I applied an apparatus, by which the foot was kept at an obtuse angle with the leg. At first great caution was required to avoid lacerating the intermediate bond of union, but after a week more painful extension was borne. At the end of eight weeks the foot was brought to a right angle with the leg, and by means of a boot, contrived so as to give support to the weak points, the act of walking could be performed with tolerable ease and assurance. The muscles of the limb became more fleshy, and the deformity nearly disappeared.

Another analogous case is detailed, with similar results.

*Rust's Magazin für die Gesamte Heilkunde.*

#### AMPUTATION OF THE SHOULDER-JOINT.

Mrs. R., aged 29, married, was admitted under Dr. Weir on 7th November.—Right shoulder is much swollen; tense, and indistinctly fluctuating. Swelling occupies the entire upper third of arm, and is of a globular appearance. Feels a constant deep-seated pain, of a dull character, but which becomes more acute during the night. Pain is so acute in handling the limb, that its state is not so well ascertained; yet, on moving arm, head of bone appears to remain more or less fixed, as if bone were broken about two inches below joint. Integuments of shoulder are discolored and interspersed with cicatrices, the consequence of blisters and issues. General health a good deal impaired; sleep prevented by pain; yet appetite continues pretty good, and has no appearance of hectic. Disease commenced fifteen months ago with a constant dull pain, unattended by swelling or redness. Eight months ago, after the ineffectual use of leeches and blisters, an attempt was made at reduction for a supposed dislocation of shoulder; after which it was discovered that arm was broken. Since that time has used issues and blisters repeatedly, but without any benefit. Latterly has supported forearm in a piece of pasteboard, and retained in a sling, by which action of elbow-joint is likewise much impaired.

Nov. 13th.—A consultation being unanimous that arm should be removed at shoulder-joint, this operation was to-day performed. Two incisions were made, by beginning immediately below acromion, and extending in a slightly semilunar direction around arm to axilla. The posterior external was made first, the integuments and muscles forming

posterior border of axilla being dissected from tumor backwards as far as joint, and upwards into axilla, keeping clear of the artery, which was felt beating distinctly. The anterior internal incision was then made, which divided the muscles on fore part of axilla. Two flaps, composed chiefly of integuments (the muscular substance being much wasted), were thus made, surrounding the joint, except that a small portion, where axillary artery was situated, was left uncut. The joint was then opened at posterior part, dividing the muscles and capsular ligament around the head of the bone, which was then easily dislodged from socket by bringing arm a little forward across the breast. The knife was now got between the tumor and glenoid cavity, and the axillary artery and nerves divided last; which separated the limb. The artery being at this time firmly compressed above the clavicle, not a drop of blood escaped. About an inch of acromion process was removed with the saw. The cartilage covering the glenoid cavity was also removed. The flaps were brought accurately together, and retained by two stitches, adhesive plaister, and bandage. The operation was wholly performed with a common scalpel. It occupied from ten to twelve minutes, and not more than four ounces of blood were lost. A small superficial artery, besides the axillary, required a ligature. Half an hour after operation, pulse 80, of good strength. Was ordered at this time eighteen drops of the black drop. In the evening, pulse 96.

14th.—Passed a quiet night, but had very little sleep. Had a good deal of pain in wound, and complains of headache and general uneasiness; pulse 116; tongue white; is habitually costive. No stool since operation. No appetite; considerable thirst. Skin of natural temperature. Vesp. sunt. Pil. al. c. Colocynth. mj. Repr. c. m. si opus.

16th.—Has continued pretty well these two days. Pulse yesterday, 116; to-day, 100. Complaints of slight sore throat. Headache removed. Bowels have been opened by an enema. C. M. Rept. Enem. Com.

17th.—Wound dressed. Adhesion has taken place partially, and discharge is moderate but of thin consistence. Had some sleep last night, and feels to-day pretty comfortable. Pulse 104. Enema operated well.

22d.—Wound dressed on the 19th, and again to-day. It has united throughout its whole extent, except a small portion at the upper part, and another at the lower, where ligatures are situated. Very little discharge at last dressing, and none at all to-day. Appetite much improved, and expresses herself altogether more comfortable.

It appears from a long report on the 30th November, and which it is unnecessary to copy, that she went on well until the 27th, when she was seized with profuse hemorrhage from the uterus, and the discharge of an organized mass similar to a mole. This reduced her very much, but the wound was quite cicatrized; a few days after the ligature came away from the axillary artery, which was on the 29th, being sixteen days from the operation. The account of the appearances which the diseased parts presented is not inserted in the journal of the Infirmary, but Dr. Weir, at his clinical lecture, mentioned that the case was one of osteo-sarcoma of the humerus, which had begun in the head of the bone, and had extended about one-third along its shaft;—that the osseous structure was changed into a soft substance, resembling the medullary part of the brain.

All the parts entering into the formation of the shoulder-joint were healthy, and the cartilage covering the head of the humerus had its natural white appearance. The diseased parts being completely removed, he anticipated the perfect recovery of the patient.—*Lon. Med. Gaz.*

#### NERVOUS AFFECTIONS OF VOLUNTARY MUSCLES.

MR. ED. LEE, in a sensible little work on nervous disorders in general, has made some observations on those affecting voluntary motion. They depend, he remarks, on a state of excitement or atony of the faculty of volition; and may be induced by moral impressions or visceral irritation. In treating these affections, the patient's mind should be abstracted as much as possible from his complaints—mental or bodily irritation removed—and the functions of the chylopoietic organs improved, as far as in our power. We subjoin two cases, from hospital practice.

CASE I.—“An unmarried female, aged 20, was admitted into St. George's Hospital, in July, 1827, having two months previously fallen and hurt her left elbow and hip. Considerable pain and discoloration of the elbow were caused by the accident, but subsided after the employment of a liniment. When received into the hospital, the elbow-joint was in a state of semiflexion, and the fingers and thumb firmly closed. While the patient was awake, manual attempts to overcome the contraction caused a kind of hysteric paroxysm. She complained of pain extending from the elbow to the wrist; this was aggravated by moving the fore-arm, and by lightly pinching up or tapping the skin. The sensibility of the skin in other parts of the body was also morbidly increased, but her general health was not impaired. M. Brodie, whose patient she was, prescribed the application of the spirit lotion of the hospital to the elbow, and the following medicine: Tinct. Valer.: Ammon.: Vini Alôes, aa 3j. sexta quaque hora ex aqua.

The patient feeling relieved by these means, they were continued, with the occasional employment of the shower-bath, for about a month; at the expiration of which period, the pain having entirely subsided, and the patient having regained the use of the elbow and hand, the contraction recurring only for a short time at distant intervals, she was placed on the out-patients' list.”

The second case is extracted from Mr. Lee's notes, while attending the hospital at Florence.

“Dec. 10th, 1830.—Three months ago, a girl aged 17, in whom menstruation was occasionally irregularly performed, but healthy in other respects, on descending into a close cellar, fainted, and fell to the ground. In falling, she struck her neck against some projecting body; abscess formed in the situation of the injury—was opened—and healed at the expiration of six weeks. Some days before her admission to the hospital she lost the use of her left arm, and shortly after, that of the left leg; the extremities of the right side subsequently became paralytic, and she was brought to the hospital in this state in the beginning of November. The intellect, the functions of respiration and digestion, continued unimpaired, as did those of the detrusor urinæ and sphincter ani muscles. The case

was considered to be inflammation of the spinal marrow. Repeated bleeding, the application of leeches and blisters along the spine, low diet, the exhibition of strychnine, and the formation of a sore by caustic in the situation of the previous abscess, produced no amelioration.

A fortnight ago she suddenly heard of the death of a near relation ; and, from that time, constant movements of the limbs succeeded to the state of paralysis in which they had previously lain. These movements have continued ever since, the arms are incessantly beating against the breast, the thighs and legs alternately bent and extended with violence. Though pale, her countenance does not indicate the existence of organic disease, the intellectual and vital operations are not impaired, she answers questions readily, the tongue is clean, the pulse weak. The prognosis delivered by her physician is unfavorable. She takes no medicine, but leeches are occasionally applied along the spine.

Dec. 24th.—The depletory measures have been discontinued, and the quantity of food increased, since the 14th. The patient has had, during the last two days, several hysterical symptoms, such as tremulous motions of the eyelids, loss of voice, occasional fits of laughter. The movements of the limbs are less violent, and at times cease altogether ; she sleeps well, and her appetite is good.

Dec. 30th.—The patient, having been allowed a more full diet, is much improved in appearance ; the movements are now almost entirely confined to the hands, and cease if her attention can be drawn off from her complaint."

Some cases are also given from Sir Charles Bell's Exposition, and other sources.

Mr. Lee's little work is of a practical nature, and worthy of attention, the author being a gentleman of observation, who has carefully studied his profession in this and in other countries.—*Med. Chir. Rev.*

#### ON THE EFFECTS OF MAMMARY IRRITATION IN AMENORRHŒA.

THE sympathy between the uterus and mamma is familiar to practitioners, but their attention has been usually directed to the alterations produced in the condition of the latter, by the changes that occur in the state and in the functions of the former. The following facts, stated by Dr. Patterson in the Dublin Journal, would appear to prove that the influence of the one upon the other is reciprocal, and that the physician in acting upon the mamma can exert some degree of power on the uterus.

CASE I.—Mary Reardon, aged 24 years, of moderately corpulent habit, was admitted into the Rathkeale Hospital on the 10th of August, 1832. She labored under slight synochial fever, which in a few days yielded to venesection and purgatives. On the 19th of Aug. symptoms which were considered of a hysterical character presented themselves, with pain in the upper and outer part of the right side of the chest. For the latter affection a small sinapism was prescribed, but from inattention of the nurse, it was made so large that it covered a considerable portion of the mamma. The sinapism remained on for half an hour.

At the visit on the following morning, the 20th August, Reardon com-

plained that the right breast was exceedingly painful, the pain being very different in its character from that which she had before experienced. On examination, the whole side of the chest was found considerably swollen; there was slight diffused redness of the skin; and though the mamma itself was enlarged to four or five times its natural bulk, yet there was no circumscribed hardness, nor any tendency to suppurative inflammation.

On the 21st of August the right mamma and adjoining parts of the chest were found much more enlarged than they had been at the preceding visit. The left mamma and side of the thorax were unaffected, and it was announced by the nurse that the catamenia had that morning appeared, and were then present in considerable quantity.

This discharge, which, as the patient stated, had been for two years and a half wholly suppressed, continued to flow for two days; then it began to decline, and with it the tumefaction of the mamma gradually disappeared.

The attention of Dr. Patterson was arrested by the agency apparently exerted by the sinapism placed upon the mamma, over the catamenial secretion. He tried the same means in the next case that was presented.

CASE II.—Catherine Power, aged 19, applied to Dr. Patterson, on the 14th September, 1832, complaining of headache, languor, loss of appetite, and inability to attend to her usual business, that of a servant. She stated that about the middle of April, the menstrual discharge being then present, she incautiously exposed herself to cold in washing clothes at a river. The catamenia then suddenly ceased, had not since returned, and from that period she had been constantly subject to ill health. She had consulted different medical gentlemen, and taken a great variety of medicine with little advantage.

Dr. Patterson directed that the clavicular half of the right mamma should be covered with a sinapism. The consequence was that the whole right breast became much swollen, hot, and painful. The next morning the enlargement of the mamma was very much increased, the tumefaction having extended to the clavicle and axilla of the irritated side. There was no hard circumscribed or prominent tumor, but a painful diffuse elastic distension of the mammary gland and surrounding cellular substance. On that evening the catamenia appeared. They continued for two or three days, and in a week the girl was so well that Dr. Patterson discontinued his attendance.

Both patients have since continued to menstruate with regularity.

Dr. Patterson remarks with judgment and with candor, that it must not be supposed that mammary irritation is applicable to every form of amenorrhœa. He does more than admit the possibility of failure, he presents an instance. In order that the evidence may be laid before our readers, and that Dr. Patterson's laudable and uncommon candor may be fraught with as extensive benefit as he could wish, we shall adduce the unsuccessful as well as the favorable cases.

CASE III.—Mary Fitzgibbon, aged about 21 years, of spare habit, was affected with headache, and irregular dyspeptic symptoms. The headache permanent, with occasional aggravation; countenance and tongue chlorotic; mamma undeveloped. The menses had been scanty and ir-



regular from the 16th to the 19th year of her age, but during the last two years they have been totally suppressed. No apparent organic impediment.

A sinapism was first applied to one breast, and afterwards a similar application was made to both breasts at the same time. But though the sinapisms produced their ordinary effects, considerable pain and cutaneous irritation, yet the enlargement of the mammae was very trifling, and there was no consequent uterine action.—*Ibid.*

## CICUTA MACULATA.

[Communicated by "W." for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

DEAR SIR,—The following is an account of the effects of the root of *Cicuta maculata*, in a case which came under my observation. The subject was a medical student, attending lectures at Castleton, Vt. at the time. He had experimented on himself with several of the narcotics previously; and in one instance had taken, in the course of six hours, 3ss. of extract of conium, with no other effect than the production of double vision, and an affection of the voluntary muscles like that which patients have in chorea, at the same time not affecting their power in sudden direct exertion, as jumping. He afterwards took 3ij. of this at once, with the same effect. Of the same extract, 18 grs. a day, given to two persons, men who were apparently of ordinary susceptibility, produced constant vertigo and double vision.

The subject of the case to be related entertained the notion that the cicuta was not only very similar in its narcotic properties to conium, but identical with it. As to its having the deobstruent or alterative properties of conium, there is yet some doubt, but probably it does not possess them. The root of the cicuta is said to be four or five times as active as the extract of conium, and the subject having very little doubt of the identity of the effects, took a larger dose than he otherwise would have ventured upon. On the third of September last, he chewed and swallowed a quantity of the green root, ascertained by weighing a piece of the same size to be of about fifteen grs. weight—one-fifteenth only of the weight which he had taken of ext. conii. Ate dinner as usual, and after dinner, about half an hour after taking the cicuta, began to feel rather queer about the head; at the same time the eyes were too sensible to light. This was at about half-past 12. Delirium followed, and the patient recollected nothing that took place till 3, though much of the time he was talking, and the first part of it he was walking about. At 1 he had a convulsion of a decidedly epileptic kind, lasting four or five minutes, marked by frothing at the mouth, distorted livid countenance, and short spasms of all the muscles. An attempt was made to administer an emetic of sulphate of copper, which was resisted by the patient, and during the attempt the stomach was pretty thoroughly evacuated by spontaneous vomiting. Pulse, before the convulsions, 51 and of ordinary strength; afterwards became weak. The pupil was thought a little contracted, but I do not think it was so. Pulse could not be felt during the convulsion. Thirty drops of laudanum, with ten grs. carb. ammoniæ, were

given in 3j. of brandy after vomiting. Frictions of ol. peri. were used over the throat and stomach so as to vesicate. Forty-five minutes past 1, another convulsion followed, which was more severe than the first, after which, for a minute, the subject had the appearance of one dead, and was by some thought to be dead in good earnest. Brandy and laudanum were given freely at short intervals, with capsicum and carb. ammoniz. There was no return of convulsion after this, and the pulse became fuller and slower. (I had forgotten to mention that between the convulsions the pulse was rapid). After 3 the delirium went off rather suddenly, and the patient was somewhat surprised at finding himself flat on his back, hardly able to stir a finger, and a roomfull of long faces all around him. At this time there was some retching and vomiting, and this occurred on every attempt at raising the head, but not when the head was horizontal. There was a violent itching of the nose, but muscular weakness was so great that the patient said he could not do his own scratching. The muscles, though extremely weak, were manageable. Took brandy, peppermint, and strong broth, well sharpened with capsicum, at short intervals. Under this treatment the symptoms gradually went off. Between 2 and 4 in the morning vomited a little two or three times, of a greenish substance, intensely bitter; after which, slept quietly till 8, at which time patient said he was as well as before, and made no difference in his occupation from what it had been.

There was no pain during the operation of this article, nor was vision affected; in these two points differing from the case you mention in your communication to the Boston Journal for August. I do not know whether to lay this difference to difference of constitution, or to say that the effect in this case transcended the point of pain, as an excessive dose of tart. ant. sometimes does that of vomiting, or an excessive dose of opium or brandy of stimulating. I am rather disposed to think the latter is the correct way of accounting for the difference of effects in the two cases, though recovery in this was much more prompt than in the other case. The subject, you will recollect, was a young man of tolerable robustness, whereas the other was a female who had been some years an invalid. Something ought, however, to be allowed for peculiarity of constitution, I think, as in the case of the young man the root was not very finely divided before it was swallowed, and consequently it did not act at once, and its effects were gradually increasing for near two hours. In fact, on second thoughts, I am wrong in what I have written above, in accounting for the different effects in the two cases on the principle of transcendancy of action. Had the constitution been the same, certainly at some point, in the gradual increase of effect, the pain noticed as being so conspicuous in the other case ought to have been present. The effect of the stimulant and exhilarant narcotics given in those doses in which stimulant and exhilarant effects are most evident, with little of their narcotic effects, was equally evident in the two cases, and I shall mention in my next two or three instances in which this was much more conspicuous and instant in producing relief, and that without being followed by anything like prostration.

The attention of the subject was turned to the difference in the effects produced by this and those produced by conium. In the first place the



convulsions produced by conium are said to be always tetanic; those by cicuta were in this case, at least, epileptic. Double vision was produced by conium, but vision was unaffected by cicuta, except sensibility to light was a little increased. Conium produced a sense of twitching in or just under the skin, as is seen in animals who have the cutaneous muscles extended over a large part of the body. There was nothing of this from cicuta. Conium produced an affection of the voluntary muscles, like that in chorea, rendering walking very difficult—the subject executing a vast variety of queer manœuvres before he could put his foot where he wanted it, at the same time he could run or jump as well, or nearly as well, as ever. There was nothing of this from cicuta, but an excessive weakness only. I do not think these different effects are explicable by saying that in case of the cicuta they transcended the point for producing such effects as were produced by conium, as the cicuta was gradually increasing in effects for two hours.

From these two cases I should not think that cicuta was any more nearly related to conium than to any of the simple narcotics, and probably it is less so. In cases of poisoning by cicuta, accounts of which have been published in the newspapers, the smallest quantity I recollect hearing of as producing death, has been 3j. I think less would do for most persons. The subject of the case related was extremely unsusceptible to conium, but probably is as susceptible to cicuta, and perhaps more so, than the majority of persons. On cutting into the green root of cicuta, an oily fluid is seen standing in small drops on the cut surface. This is thought to possess its properties. It is soluble in alcohol and ether. A gentleman of the class attempted to get some of this oil after this case happened, but there were few conveniences to be had where we then were, and he but partially succeeded. As he obtained it, it was mixed with a substance of an adhesive character which was soluble in sulphuric ether and alcohol, and he did not succeed in separating it. I took about a drop of this mixed fluid; and whether from imagination or not, I cannot tell, but I certainly had queer feelings about the head and eyes. I mentioned these feelings to those about me, and they were alarmed, not wishing to have another scrape from cicuta like the one I have detailed, and persuaded me to take a pretty liberal dose of laudanum and brandy as a preventive of its effects. The fact was, I was somewhat, and not a little, alarmed myself. I intend to make experiments with it whenever I can find some of the root, and get some one to stand by to assist in case of danger. I feel rather shy of it, as in this case it gave almost no warning of danger before the convulsion.

It has not been much used as a medicine, but I am informed that a physician in the western part of this State uses an alcoholic tincture of it in cases of chorea and epilepsy, and that he likes its effect in these diseases, and has as good success as with datnra, or perhaps better. I think he also uses it in mania with benefit. He gives, in cases of common susceptibility, a small teaspoonful of alcoholic tincture three times a day, and increases till some decided effect is produced. I do not know the proportions for the tincture, or the strength of the alcohol, but doubt the tincture being saturated. It has been used in various other cases in which narcotics are indicated, and has been thought to have done good.

It has activity enough, at any rate, as it is the most active indigenous article with which I am acquainted. I am, &c. X+Z.

#### ATROPA BELLADONNA.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

SIR,—The writer of the communication in your last Number, on the use of belladonna to overcome rigidity of the os uteri and perinæum, says, "I am unable to state the source from which the hint was obtained in this country, that belladonna might be successfully employed to obviate this species of rigidity; but, judging from the effects of particular narcotics upon other parts of the body, the suggestion, when I first heard it, seemed to be very ingenious, and to have some pretty strong analogies in its favor." He afterwards adds, "It does not seem to be proposed by any one physician, or to be patronized by any single school," &c.

If this writer will turn to the Treatise on Midwifery by Velpeau, he will find the employment of the belladonna, in the cases in question, strongly recommended. I am surprised, indeed, that a book, now so well known in this country, should have escaped his observation. But as the statement of Velpeau has not been noticed by him, and may, in like manner, have been overlooked by others, it may be well to subjoin the account of the use of the remedy by this author, which is contained in the following extract from his work.

"Spasmodic contractions of the os uteri have also been observed, and I have several times seen its dilatation completely arrested, or considerably retarded for hours together, by this irregularity. In some instances, the os uteri is at the same time very sensible, dry, hot, highly irritated and painful, although regular in shape; a valuable remedy in such a state of things, and far more efficacious than hip-baths, and emollient, mucilaginous, or narcotic injections, or various sorts of ointments usually recommended, is found in the belladonna ointment, proposed by Chaussier and Dr. Conquest, and frequently made use of by Madame Lachapelle at the Maison d'Accouchement at Paris. Its employment, too, is followed by no inconvenience: when I have occasion for it, I direct 3j. of the juice or extract of belladonna to be triturated with 3j. of cerate or hog's lard; with the fingers I easily introduce a portion of this ointment, as large as a filbert, up to the os uteri, the whole circumference of which is soon anointed with it. The belladonna acts here as it does upon the iris, when applied betwixt the eyelids a few hours previously to performing the operation for cataract, and often with a promptitude that is really surprising.

"In the spring of 1825, a young woman of good constitution was seized with labor pains at 5 o'clock in the evening; the labor went on regularly all night. The next morning, at 6 o'clock, the os uteri was as large as a three livres piece, at least; from that time the dilatation progressed slowly, although the force of the pains did not diminish at all; a vein was opened in the arm; the agitation of the patient went on increasing, and the orifice continued in nearly the same state. M. Ribail, who had the care of the woman, sent her to the hospital, where I saw her at

half past 6 in the evening; the os uteri was a little larger than a five franc piece, and formed a thin circle, almost sharp, hot, and extremely sensible; the pains still continued; the ointment was applied at 7 o'clock, and before the clock struck 8 the delivery was complete.

"Conclusive as was this result, it nevertheless appeared to me difficult to attribute it exclusively to the action of the ointment; but since then I have used it in five different cases, and in all of them the effect has been, if not altogether as prompt, at least quite as undeniable."

In a preceding page, Velpeau speaks of its application in ordinary cases of rigidity. The remedy is certainly deserving of farther trial, and I see no reason to apprehend, with your correspondent, any very serious opposition to its use. At the same time, it will not, I presume, be generally viewed as quite so important an addition to our remedial measures as was afforded by the introduction of antimony, cinchona, &c. into the materia medica—which his observations would seem to imply—nor will it, probably, in the case under consideration, supersede the use of the lancet.

W. W.

*Plymouth, March 15, 1834.*

## BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, MARCH 26, 1834.

### RICE.

THERE is probably no vegetable which contributes in so large a degree to the support of the human race, as rice. Even the cereal grains, important and useful as they are, yield the palm to it in this respect. The inhabitants of China and India, and the whole slave population of the United States, amounting to not less than 450 millions of the human race, live mostly on this article, and there is now no civilized nation in existence with whom it does not constitute one of the principal articles of diet. Such being the extent to which this substance is employed, it seems almost superfluous to argue in favor of its nutritious qualities. The composition of rice, according to the analysis which has been made of it by Mr. Fowle, is as follows:—

Fecula	-	-	96
Sugar	-	-	1
Albumen	-	-	.20
Oily Matter	-	-	1.50

The large proportion in which the fecula exists in this substance renders it eminently nutritive. To persons in health, indeed, and accustomed to an admixture of animal and vegetable diet, rice alone is not sufficiently stimulating to be depended on. Taken in large quantities, it produces a sense of fulness and distension, which is soon followed by a return of hunger. Those, however, whom habit has inured to its exclusive use, enjoy good health, and obtain a sufficient amount of muscular power, though inferior to that which is possessed by the omnivorous European, or the inhabitant of the United States, bred in the habits of civilized life. From the degree to which blindness prevails in India and China, it has been supposed that the exclusive use of rice might have

a tendency to produce this affection : but if at all connected with the digestive system, as is not improbable, it seems far more likely to be the scarcity of food than its quality which occasions it ; for cheap as the article of rice is, the lascar of India or the peasant of China too often finds his means inadequate to obtain a sufficient amount of it to sustain the functions of life. It is a curious fact, however, that when Magendie tried his famous experiments on dogs, by feeding them with substances containing no azote, death took place in a period varying from five to twenty days, and all without exception exhibited ulceration of the cornea.

Rice has been employed as an article of food from the most remote period. The first classic author who gives any particular account of it is Strabo. He describes the mode of its cultivation in Egypt, and gives to it the name of *oryza*, probably by corrupting an Egyptian appellation very similar to ours. Linnæus speaks of Ethiopia as peculiarly the country for rice ; but it has been cultivated from time immemorial in China, India, and the greater part of the warm countries of Asia and Africa, from which it has been transplanted to America. It has even succeeded in Italy and Spain.

The cultivation of rice has this advantage, that it impoverishes the soil less than most of the grains, as the roots principally absorb water. For this very reason, however, the cultivation of rice is unhealthy, and the exhalations from the soil on which it grows are productive of the various forms of intermittent fever. For this reason the cultivation of rice has been discouraged by the governments of those parts of Southern Europe, to which, in other respects, it is well adapted. A variety is described as raised in Cochin China, which grows and comes to perfection on upland, deriving a portion of its sustenance from the frequent rains with which it is watered.

Before being employed as food, the grain of rice must be stripped off the husk which adheres to it very closely. For this purpose, the usual process has been to pound the article in mortars worked by machinery. The process of hulling the rice of our Southern States has till lately been performed before the article was packed for exportation. This mode of proceeding, otherwise sufficiently convenient, is attended with the disadvantage of exposing the rice to the air, and some part of its freshness is therefore lost before using. Within a short period a mill has been established in this vicinity, where the rice is hulled, as we are informed, by a new process. After this operation, however, rice may be kept for a long time, and with due care will preserve its good qualities longer than any other vegetable article.

From the analysis above given, it appears that gluten does not exist in rice to any appreciable extent, and this circumstance renders it unfit for the manufacture of bread. That made entirely of this material is compact, friable, and gives evidence of imperfect panification. Mixed in certain proportion, however, with wheat flour, that of rice is capable of being made into bread of excellent quality. The various forms and combinations which are given to it by culinary art, are almost innumerable, and among them are some of the most useful vegetable preparations which we possess. From their simply nutritive character and facility of digestion, many of these are peculiarly adapted to the use of the sick and the convalescent. Some of the most common are the decoction, or rice water with or without the *secula* itself ; the grains boiled in water ; and a jelly made by boiling the flour in milk and then allowing it to cool.

Rice has been often recommended and employed as an astringent, and its effect in controlling excessive peristaltic action is such as to suggest this idea. It is far more probable, however, that its usefulness in diarrhoea and dysentery is dependent on its demulcent and soothing qualities, and not on any specific virtue of the kind alluded to. In other inflammations of the mucous membranes, as bronchitis and strangury, preparations of this substance employed as beverage are manifestly beneficial.

The decoction of rice is usually prepared by adding the flour to cold water, in the proportion of a quarter to half an ounce to a pint. The fecula begins to dissolve when the liquid has acquired the temperature of 144 deg. ; to this liquid is added gum arabic, and to render it more agreeable it is sweetened with sugar, and rendered aromatic with a little cannilla or some similar ingredient. Various other pharmaceutical and culinary preparations may be learned by referring to the proper authorities. In the Southern States, boiled rice is as essential an accompaniment to the first course at table, as potatoes or any other vegetable with us. Its use in this way is also gaining ground among us, and is found to be equally agreeable and salutary. When prepared for this purpose, the water, with salt, should be added boiling hot to the whole grains ; boil twenty minutes, turn off the water if any is left, allow the rice to remain on the fire to dry, and the grains will be left dry and distinct.

By fermentation, rice is capable of producing a kind of beer, called *sake* in Japan, and *samsac* in China. Distilled, it furnishes *arrack*, a spirit much used in the East, and which is also manufactured to some extent in this country.

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#### SELF-SUPPORTING DISPENSARIES.

As much has been said of these institutions abroad, and their utility has been frequently disputed, we shall place before our readers the evidence to this point furnished by Dr. Chester, Surgeon to the Birmingham and Deritend General Self-Supporting Dispensary. It contains a concise but clear account of the management of that institution, and of the degree of success which has attended it.

"Under the denomination of Self-Supporting Dispensary, two very different institutions, having the same intent, but conducted on very different principles, are included. In one, any poor person, wishing to become a member, is admitted on the payment of one penny per week for himself, and a similar sum for as many members of his family as he chooses to contribute for. In the other, a poor person purchases a ticket for 3s. 6d. which entitles himself or one individual of his family to medical attendance for six weeks ; and to encourage forethought, a virtue in which this class are peculiarly deficient, a ticket shall be available for any sickness occurring to the purchaser within three years.

"Both institutions have honorary subscribers, who receive four sick and one midwifery ticket for each guinea subscribed, and by whom the incidental expenses of printing, stationery, &c. are defrayed.

"The views also of both are similar, namely, to enable the lower classes to obtain prompt and competent medical assistance in paying a sum proportionate to their earnings, and thus to relieve them from the necessity of applying for gratuitous or direct parochial assistance ; to prevent their incurring expenses for medical assistance, which long-continued disease would render them unable to pay ; to enable them, during health, to pro-

vide against sudden illness, occurring to themselves or their families ; and lastly, but principally, to prevent that sense of degradation and self-contempt, which must unavoidably arise in every honest bosom, on being obliged to have recourse to the workhouse when attacked with illness.

"In this institution, each surgeon not only attends his patients, but also supplies them with medicine, by which the enormous expense of a medical dispensing establishment is avoided, and the sum paid for each ticket is such as is calculated, on the average, to reimburse the surgeon for medicine.

"The self-supporting dispensary, of which I am one of the surgeons, was formed about the middle of June, 1830 ; and from that period to the present, the number of persons admitted as members, is as follows :

June 1830 to March 1831 . . . .	833
March 1831 to March 1832 . . . .	1406
March 1832 to March 1833 . . . .	1034
March 1833 to September 1833 . . .	1069

Of whom 113 are midwifery, 551 charitable or gratuitous patients, and the remainder those who but for this institution would have had recourse to the workhouse.

"I joined this institution at its formation, and have every reason to believe, from personal experience, that it contributes more to the development, or rather exaltation, of the principles of the lower classes, than any institution I have ever known."

#### RE-VACCINATION IN THE PRUSSIAN ARMY.

We copy the following statement from the London Medico-Chirurgical Review for January last. It is extracted by Dr. Johnson as an important test of the protective power of re-vaccination, and as such, it cannot but be interesting to the readers of *this Journal*, and important to the profession generally.

"About two years ago, a very alarming epidemic of genuine smallpox appeared in different parts of Germany, and threatened to commit great devastation both in civil and military life. Several regiments lost a number of men, and it was observed that the disease affected chiefly the young soldiers and recruits who were at and between the years of 18 and 24.

It was therefore an object of army-policy to investigate the history of this epidemic with all possible attention and accuracy, and to endeavor to devise some means for the extirpation and subsequent prevention of this desolating scourge, which if not arrested might often paralyze the very sinews of war.

The military physicians recommended that a general re-vaccination of all the recruits should be forthwith instituted, whether the marks of a previous vaccination were found on their arms or not. The government, ever attentive to the welfare and efficiency of our armies, promptly acted upon the advice of the medical board. In 1831, when the smallpox epidemic broke out at Erfurt, two regiments of the 3d division were stationed there : 6020 in all were vaccinated at that time ; and out of that number 2354, or more than a third, exhibited genuine cowpox vesicles.

In the 8th division 2784 were vaccinated ; and of these, 925 proved to be quite susceptible to the virus.



During the following year, nearly a somewhat higher proportion was obtained ; in one division, 1594 out of 3942—and in another, so many as 2535 out of 3234.

Now, all must agree, that those individuals, in whom the operation succeeded, were truly susceptible of the contagion of smallpox ; the capability of receiving one poison being coincident with and indicative of receiving the other ; at least such is the prevailing opinion ; and until it be contradicted by facts, it is a safe and feasible one. How great must therefore be the danger of such a fatal scourge as smallpox invading our armies, especially when regiments are crowded together in a narrow space, as is often the case during war !

Fortunately we have already proof that a preservative means, when properly and assiduously employed, exists in our own hands ; *at Erfurt it was found that not one of the re-vaccinated soldiers was seized with the contagion during the prevalence of the disease in that place.*

We need no farther proof of the utility of the official order."

#### UTERINE HEMORRHAGE FROM PLACENTAL PRESENTATION.

THE Glasgow Journal contains a very interesting detail, by Dr. J. Maxwell, of a case in which the os uteri remained undilated, notwithstanding uterine contractions had continued 24 hours, and hemorrhage more than 36. We can give only a brief outline of the case.

When Dr. M. saw the patient she had been flooding since the preceding day, followed by labor-pains. The uterine contractions were easily recognized by the hand—but the patient herself was something unusual in the condition of the parts, as her pains had not the effect of carrying down the uterus. On trying a pain, no part of the uterus could be felt—but with the hand in the vagina, the os tincæ was found to be firm, and of a rounded figure—the cervix uteri by no means distended. A finger passed through the os uteri did not recognize any part of the child, nor of the placenta. The hemorrhage was considerable. The tampon and other means were used. The hemorrhage, however, continued, together with the pains, but without dilatation of the os tincæ; and the painful alternative presented itself, of seeing the patient die exhausted, or of attempting the delivery under circumstances the most unpromising. In company with a medical friend, the delivery was determined on. A decoction of the secale cornutum was prepared, and a glass of wine and seventy drops of laudanum were given. With immense difficulty, the hand was partially got within the os tincæ, when the placenta was discovered, lining that part of the uterus immediately above the contracted part. The fingers were pushed through it ; and the liquor amnii was discharged. The feet of the child were seized, and easily brought down. The secale cornutum was now given, and the hand was withdrawn with considerable difficulty. Traction by the feet delivered the child, and the discharge afterwards was moderate. She had a good recovery.

#### PREVENTION OF SPINAL DISEASES.

A CORRESPONDENT writes thus from Orford, N. H. "I would like, Sir, to propose the question to the profession, what are the best means of correcting and removing the liability to recurrence of spinal diseases ; for, in this section, they are very common, but for the most part easily con-

trolled, by cupping, blistering, &c. Yet, so far as I have noticed, a lively susceptibility of recurrence remains an indefinite length of time, in spite of frictions, stimulating washes, plaisters, &c. Respectfully yours, &c."

**Tartar Emetic affecting the Child through the Mother.**—M. Minaret, of Châtillon-de-Michaëlle, while treating a young woman for an attack of pleuritis, had an opportunity of observing the following curious fact. The patient had at her breast a child of four months, and being put on tartar emetic, it soon appeared that the medicine operated on the child as well as the mother. M. Minaret, anxious to ascertain the fact, had the infant put to the breast in his presence; but the milk was no sooner tasted than it proved nauseating; the child showed every symptom of sickness and disgust, and threw up a quantity of coagulum. Another nurse was immediately procured, and the child was soon recovered. The mother also got well not long after, and resumed the suckling of her infant without any similar bad effects.—*Gazette Médicale*.

**Application of Laudanum to Nasal Polypi.**—Dr. Durr relates the case of a woman who had been subject, for many years, to polypi of the nose, and which were extirpated in consequence of the inconvenience they produced. They soon grew again—were removed once more, and grew a third time. Butter of antimony was then applied, without avail; after which, recourse was had to laudanum, applied with a hair pencil to the polypi. At the end of five weeks they had not only ceased to increase, but were rather less. At the end of two months they were reduced to little dry withered bags: they were taken out at the end of this time, without pain or difficulty.—*Journal der Practischen Heilkunde*.

**Medical Degrees.**—The annual Commencement at the Charleston Medical College took place on the 7th ult. The degree of M.D. was conferred on 30 alumni of the Institution, and on several from other Colleges.

**Miss. College of Pharmacy.**—At the annual meeting of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, held on the 19th ult. the following gentlemen were elected officers for the year ensuing:

President, Daniel Noyes; Vice President, Charles White; Secretary, Nathaniel Brewer; Treasurer, Samuel N. Brewer; Librarian, Edward Noyes; Curators, Joseph Kidder, Charles French, Ebenezer Wight, Richard A. Newell; Auditor, John Bacon.

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Dr. Cox's mode of treatment in enlarged tonsils is received.

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Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending March 21, 22. Males, 13—Females, 9.

Of dropsy on the brain, 2—accidental, 2—erysipelas, 1—convulsions, 1—drowned, 1—fits, 1—consumption, 4—old age, 1—lung fever, 1—intemperance, 1—canker in the bowels, 2—strangulation, 1—infantile, 1—unknown, 1. Stillborn, 1.

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## ADVERTISEMENTS.

### SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS.

An assortment of Surgical Instruments for sale at No. 35 Washington Street, five doors south of Cornhill, by A. P. RICHARDSON.

Surgical Instruments made and repaired as above. Orders forwarded will meet with punctual attention. Feb 19 op

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